

## Rejections under § 112

Paragraph 5 of the Office Action: The rejection of claims 7, 21, 46 and 65 under § 112 has been addressed, in that the lack of antecedent basis has been rectified. Accordingly, this rejection is believed to be moot.

Paragraph 6 of the Office Action: The rejection of claims 2, 38, 42, 63, 74 and 78 for lack of enablement is traversed. The Examiner states that there is no support in the specification for the limitation in these claims which specifies, generally that the status field can have any one of  $N$  possible values, where  $N > 2$ . Apparently, however, the Examiner must have overlooked several sections in the specification, which are directly related to this aspect of the inventions. For example, in one passage it specifies that:

“The status fields can be used essentially as multiple context filters for assisting an author in reducing the number of potentially inappropriate words as they may be conveyed to multiple intended audiences. *The ratings for the words in any of the status fields can have any range of values* and are preferably coded at the time the words are placed into the electronic dictionary. They can also be modified by the user, later, if desired.” See page 5, ll. 18 – 23 (emphasis added).

Further on at page 8, ll. 16+:

“Each entry 51 in dictionary 50 includes a word and one or more associated status fields ( $SF_1, SF_2 \dots SF_n$ ), which, in its simplest form, can be a single bit field that is either set or not set, depending on whether the word has been previously designated as potentially inappropriate.”

and still later on page 8, ll. 21+:

“In a preferred embodiment, status field  $SF_1$  can be allocated sufficient coding bits so that it may have *any one of  $N$  possible values, where  $N$  represents a rating indicating a relative ranking of inappropriateness*. This feature allows a degree of grading the words of a vocabulary in shades of grey so to speak, and permits more precise control by the user of the level of inappropriateness that can be tolerated within any particular document. For example, *using a scale from 1-10*, words that are known and commonly used in a vulgar or offensive fashion can be given a 10 value rating, while words that are commonly understood in only harmless contexts can be given a 1 rating.” (emphasis added).

Thus, the Applicants submit that the disclosure is replete with references to the fact that the status field can have a range of values, so that, for example, ratings for individual words can be precisely controlled if desired, and language thresholds set for specific documents. These references are relatively clear, and there seems little doubt that they would enable one of skill in the art to practice the invention of such claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection for these claims is

requested.

Paragraph 7 of the Office Action: The rejection of claim 29 under § 112 for indefiniteness has also been addressed. While the Examiner did not specifically point out the portion of the claim that is considered objectionable (so that the Applicant could ensure that such concerns were addressed) Applicant has nonetheless amended the claim as noted above in a fashion that should correct any such deficiencies.

### Rejections under § 103

Paragraphs 9 – 13 of the Office Action: All of the claims were substantively rejected as being obvious in light of Bradshaw (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,722) alone or in combination with Newbold (U.S. Patent No. 5,576,955) and/or Roth (U.S. Patent No. 5,907,839) and Mogilevsky (U.S. Patent No. 5,649,222). As a preliminary matter and before examining the claim limitations in more detail, Applicant believes that a review of the Bradshaw reference is in order, since it forms the basis for the bulk of the rejections made by the Examiner, and this discussion is helpful to an understanding of the more detailed arguments presented further below.

The Bradshaw et. al. reference bears some superficial semblances to some aspects of the present invention, in that it is directed generally to the problem of blocking the transmission of unwanted content, such as vulgar and/or pornographic material. See, e.g. Bradshaw Abstract. The Bradshaw disclosure is particularly concerned with so-called internet filters, which systems are becoming increasingly prevalent in library computer systems, especially in public schools. From a high level perspective, however, the goal of this type of system, is slightly different from that of the present invention, in that the Bradshaw approach seeks to solve the problem of absolutely preventing the receipt of inappropriate material from a third party (*i.e.*, such as the Internet) towards the user, while the present invention is more oriented towards the opposite situation: *i.e.*, trying to give the user tools to allow them to avoid disseminating inappropriate material to a third party.

While both problems share some similarities, there are also some important differences which express themselves in how the problem is optimally solved in both environments. In Bradshaw, for example, the solution is directed mostly to ways of detecting and preventing inappropriate requests for access to restricted files, restricted websites, etc. using very rigid and inflexible filtering rules so that users can be blocked from the same, and so that the user's access to the system can be curtailed (or prohibited). The present invention is not so concerned with *access* so much as it is with intelligent *distribution*, and so the Bradshaw filtering techniques could be used in a

complementary fashion with embodiments practicing the present claims (*see e.g.*, claim 31).

The other general limitations of Bradshaw include the fact that is basically only a pure filtering mechanism, so there is little discussion given to the kind of approach discussed in the present invention, which pertains more generally to intelligent document distribution schemes. Moreover, while the present invention uses some degree of filtering for examining document content, and can be used in document filtering environments, it is extremely flexible and unlike the system shown in Bradshaw which is relatively rigid, and which appears to apply to every kind of communication passed in and out of the system without regard to the type of document, the sender, the recipient, etc.

In Bradshaw restricting/blocking access is so important that, if the system detects one of the prohibited words, it locks up the user's computer, preventing him/her from further activity. *See e.g.*, Bradshaw at column 9, ll. 1 – 9. It can be seen quite plainly that this is not practical in many real world working environment where it is entirely possible that entry of such prohibited words might be inadvertent, and yet an employee might waste valuable time trying to get a supervisor to reset the employee's machine. While some milder measures are contemplated (*see e.g.*, column 9, ll. 31 – 35) it is apparent overall that the Bradshaw system is not intended or geared to assist a user in any respect to understand an inappropriate error, and/or to offer constructive suggestions for fixing the same. However, various embodiments of the present claims accomplish just that.

Another limitation of Bradshaw is that it only teaches a system that is non-user adjustable. In other words, the filter is there, it is essentially fixed/static, and the assumption is that the user should not remove or adjust it in any fashion. This deficiency also is important vis-à-vis many of the claims of the present invention as discussed in more detail herein, which specifically concern allowing a user to control the document content directly.

Other pending claims emphasize that it is both offensive language and potentially inappropriate language that is identified; the Bradshaw reference does not appear to contemplate this kind of distinction. This is useful, for example, in situations where it is desired to identify first types of language content that are commonly defined as offensive (i.e., because it is racist, sexist, obscene, etc.), and/or other secondary types of language that are potentially inappropriate for the particular recipient from a subjective perspective (by reference to some benchmark applicable to a particular audience). This limitation of Bradshaw, too, is discussed in more detail below in connection with the claims that implicate this aspect of the invention.

Another important limitation in Bradshaw that is material to many of the pending claims

concerns the fact that the filtering or detecting of inappropriate language is not done by considering the particular intended receiver of a document. In other words, the filtering is rigid, fixed and indiscriminate, and does not allow a system to specify, for example, that certain entities might be suitable recipients of particular subject matter. There is no ability or consideration given to distinguish between potential recipients of files, unlike as set out in various of the present claims. Again, this is a simple consequence of the fact that Bradshaw is looking at an opposite problem - i.e., how to restrict access - and not how to prevent dissemination - so it cannot teach this aspect of the invention as expressed and amplified in other of the pending claims.

Finally, other important aspects of the invention are now presented in more detail in the newly submitted claims. These claims emphasize for example that the content of a document can be checked on a document by document basis (i.e. a different filtering rule can be used for different documents) on a recipient by recipient basis (i.e., a different filtering rule can be used for different audience groups) and by reference to threshold values (i.e., by specifying a language sensitivity for a particular document). In other words the present inventions describe embodiments where different filters can be used with different groups, and different filters/thresholds can be used with different documents. These features are plainly not described or suggested in Bradshaw, and accordingly, these claims, too, are believed to be allowable.

The rejections for each of the individual claims are now addressed in detail below.

#### Claims 1 - 13

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite and additional step of:

“... selecting a set of filter words in one or more electronic dictionaries to be used for checking said word, said set of filter words being based in part on considering an identity of an intended recipient of said electronic document”

As mentioned above, there is no description or suggestion anywhere in Bradshaw or the other prior art of record of this type of operation, i.e., where the identity of the intended recipient is taken into consideration when selecting which filter words are to be used for examining the document. In fact, Bradshaw does not appear to provide much basis for discriminating among users even from an access perspective (i.e., tailoring the access based on the user's profile), so it really teaches even less (or nothing in fact) to one of skill in the art concerning this aspect of claim 1.

Furthermore claim 1 has been further amended to recite that the examination of the words includes a two-level analysis, i.e., “... **determining whether said has a particular meaning that is**

(1) designated as offensive in said set of filter words; and/or (2) is designated as potentially inappropriate in said set of filter words for communication to said intended recipient.”

Again, this aspect of the invention provides an additional level of control that is not disclosed/hinted at or suggested in Bradshaw or any of the prior art of record. This aspect of the invention is discussed in the specification at pages 14 – 15 for example, and means that words can be classified not only to examine if they are considered to be offensive in common usage, but also that words can be classified with reference to whether they are suitable for inclusion in a particular document drafted by the author. The latter, for example, may include text or words that are inappropriate for use according to some other context rule - i.e., they violate some particular policy of a business entity, and/or would cause embarrassment if they were distributed, and/or could implicate cultural, ethnic, gender or other group sensitivities. In this fashion, it is possible using the present invention to arrest and prevent both unintentional and intentional text problems in documents before they are disseminated.

Applicant thus submits that, as amended, claim 1 clearly presents patentable subject matter.

Dependent claims 2 – 13 should also be allowable, therefore, as they depend from claim 1 which should be allowable. In addition, however, these claims are distinguishable as well for a number of reasons that differentiate over the prior art.

In particular, claim 2 now indicates that the set of filter words are designated by “... changing a value of a filter status field...” This aspect of the invention allows for words to be selectively identified/controlled for use in examining a document based on such value. The Newbold reference cited by the Examiner against claim 2 does not use a filter “status” field, in that, while errors are classified (*see e.g.*, column 4 describing an “error identifier”) there is no attempt or suggestion made to designate which set of error identifiers will be used at any instance. In other words, the error types of Newbold are always used, and there is no mechanism for enabling/disabling them in any fashion as set out in claim 2.

Claim 3 depends from claim 2, and further emphasizes that the filter status field can have one of N separate values, and this value can be used for designating whether a word is offensive or potentially inappropriate. For example, for any particular application words with a rating of 8 or higher for N might be classified as offensive, while words with a rating over 7 for N might be potentially inappropriate. Again, this type of fine level control is not disclosed or suggested anywhere in the prior art, to allow for precise language filtering/ management of documents.

Claim 4 also depends from claim 2, and specifies that the set of filter words can be selected

with input from an author of the document. This feature of the invention, of course, is intended to benefit users so that they do not have to self-monitor their own draftings, or to try to learn every potential offensive and/or potentially inappropriate word for a particular audience. For additional convenience, claim 5 specifies that the identification of the set of filter words takes place when the electronic dictionaries (used for checking the author's document) are first generated. Since both of these claims depend from dependent claim 2, and the latter should be allowable, the applicants submit that these claims should be now allowable as well.

Dependent claim 6 indicates that an alert is generated when a word is offensive and/or potentially inappropriate. Again, Bradshaw and the other prior art does not appear to draw any distinction between two separate types of filter words, and thus cannot detect such difference, let alone disclose or suggest this limitation.

Dependent claim 7 focusses on the aspect of the invention which permits the user (i.e., an author or an administrator) to remove a particular word from a set of filter words, which can be done, for example, by availing of the procedure of claim 3 (i.e. by changing a word rating). Since this claim depends on what should now be allowable claim 3, Applicants believe this claim should be in condition for allowance as well.

Original claim 8 was rejected in light of Bradshaw, but should be allowable in light of the fact that it depends on claim 1.

Claim 9, as amended, indicates that suggestions for replacing mis-spelled words are given. The Examiner has indicated that this claim would have been obvious in light of Newbold and Bradshaw, by suggesting that the former's error handling capability could be included in the latter. The problem with this analysis is that the Bradshaw system is not designed or intended to be user-friendly (from the perspective of a document drafter), and this is apparent from the treatment it provides for people who accidentally put in inappropriate text (i.e., they are locked out from further access). Thus, one of skill in the art would in fact be led away from incorporating some form of input assistance of the type described in Newbold into Bradshaw. Accordingly, this type of operation as set forth in claim 9 is actually quite non-obvious in light of these references, and thus should be allowable.

Claim 10 as amended is similarly distinguishable again, because as with claim 9, it is not reasonable to suggest that a person of skill in the art would use Newbold to modify Bradshaw, given that the aims of the two systems are really quite different.

Claim 11 depends from claim 1, and therefore should be allowable as well at this time.

Claim 12 further builds on the invention of claim 1, by specifying that a particular word might be found in two different electronic dictionaries corresponding to two different contexts, so that the ratings for the word in both contexts is examined to see if it is potentially inappropriate. For example, a word “xyz” might be in a standard English electronic dictionary and have a very low rating (suggesting it is probably not inappropriate for a first general audience) but the same word may have a very high rating in another electronic dictionary because it is inappropriate for a particular gender, cultural group, language group, etc. This type of multiple level language control of a document is clearly not taught or suggested in any of the prior art references.

The Roth reference cited by the Examiner discusses different “contexts” for a word, but this context is clearly limited to mean examining words that “surround” the word. For example, words surrounding the word “weather” are analyzed to see if perhaps the word should be “whether” instead. In other words, the “context” referred to Roth is not directed to the use of the word in connection with different potential audiences as set out in claim 12. Thus, in Roth, the “context” of the word itself (i.e., the surrounding words), not two different “contexts” for the same word are checked. Accordingly, this aspect of the invention is not in fact taught or suggested by Roth.

Similarly, for claim 13, while Roth discusses a “threshold” value  $\theta$  that is used for a context sensitive text system, this threshold is not apparently used in connection with a single particular word as in the present invention. Instead, the system there requires a very complicated analysis based on “surrounding words,” found around the word. The words themselves have no associated filter status field in the first place in Roth. Thus, this aspect of the invention described in claim 13, where a threshold value can be set for the filter status field before the word will be triggered as potentially inappropriate, is not disclosed or suggested.

#### Claims 14 – 23

Independent claim 14 has also been amended to distinguish clearly over the art of record. This set of claims focusses more particularly on the flexible and friendly control that can be given to an author of a document, in contrast to the rigid rules enforced by the type of system shown in Bradshaw to a document drafter. In particular, this claim now indicates that there are steps of:

“determining whether the meaning of said word or replacement word has a designation as offensive and/or potentially inappropriate for use in a text document, said designation being modifiable by the author”

Thus, this claim presents at least two distinct features over the prior art. The first aspect

parallels that already alluded to in claim 1, namely that there are two different types of classifications that are examined for each word - offensive and/or potentially inappropriate - because words can be separately classified in this fashion to increase control over language content of documents. For the reasons set forth above, Applicants believe that this distinction is clearly useful and provides patentability to this claim.

The second important aspect of this particular claim relates to the fact that the user is allowed to modify the designation of words - i.e., whether they are designated as an offensive word and/or a potentially inappropriate word. Again, in the Bradshaw system, the system users are not permitted to change whether a word is contained within a "prohibited" list, because the point of that system is to completely block access to prohibited sites. Accordingly, Bradshaw in fact teaches away from the present invention, because it would defeat the purpose of the Bradshaw system if the users were permitted to define the words on such list. In contrast, the invention of claim 14 assists an author of an electronic document to tailor his/her language content by providing them with a new tool so that word designations can be changed if necessary.

For these reasons, the Applicants submit that claim 14 is also patentable over the prior art of record.

Dependent claims 15 and 16 (depending from claim 14) have been amended in minor ways to make them conform to the new amended language of claim 14. They describe more particular embodiments of the invention of claim 14, and thus should be allowable as well.

Dependent claims 17 and 18 have been amended, and are submitted to be distinguishable over the art for the same reasons already articulated for claims 2 and 4 above. Claim 19, depending from claim 17, should be allowable for the same reasons as claim 17, and further in light of the discussion for claim 5 above.

Dependent claims 20 - 23 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons expressed above in connection with claims 6, 2, 11 and 12 respectively.

#### Claims 24 - 28

Independent claim 24 is also amended. This claim indicates that word-checking status information is stored for a document, including a table identifying offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words used in said document. As discussed above, this ability to distinguish between two types of potential problem words is unlike that shown in the art, and is not discussed or suggested anywhere. Furthermore, as noted in this claim, the user of a word processing program



drafting documents can directly modify a word filter electronic dictionary containing the offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words, so that the user can control which words in the document are to be identified in the table. For example, a document drafter in the medical field may disable certain anatomical words from being automatically flagged. This type of editorial assistance is completely lacking in Bradshaw, and is inconsistent with the type of system shown there as well, which does not provide a word processing program user with any flexibility. Accordingly, this claim is submitted to distinguish over the type of approach shown in Bradshaw. While the Mogilevsky reference arguably shows an automatic spell checker, it says nothing about the type of structure set out in the new language set out in claim 24, and therefore cannot be used to sustain any reasonable rejection.

Claims 25 - 28 depend from claim 24, and should be allowable for this reason. Furthermore, claims 27 and 28 distinguish over the art for many of the same reasons articulated for claims 12 and 13 above.

#### Claims 29 - 35

Claim 29 is more specifically directed again to those embodiments designed to assist electronic document drafters from inadvertently (or even intentionally) disseminating potentially embarrassing material. Thus, this claim recites a method of automatically word checking an electronic document as it is generated, and by allowing the user to specify one or more word filter dictionaries to be used for filtering text content of the document, where at least one of the one or more word filter dictionaries is selected based on an intended audience for the electronic document. The prior art again says nothing about allowing a user to specify a language filter selection based on the intended audience of a document, so this claim is believed to describe a capability that is not disclosed or suggested in the art.

Again, the Bradshaw reference is directed primarily to restricting access, and not to document content management, so it does not concern itself with the recipients of any documents generated there. Instead, it mechanically applies the same rule, without regard to whether some content might be otherwise acceptable for some audiences.

In contrast, using the present invention, a user might specify one language rule for communications that occur with one group of persons, and a different rule for a different group of persons. For example, in an e-mail environment, certain information might not be objectionable in communications by an author with other persons within a particular company (one audience) but

this same information might be extremely inappropriate for transmission to persons outside the company (a different audience) because it would be embarrassing and/or possibly cause harm and/or financial loss to the employee or his employer. While the Bradshaw reference discusses an "e-mail" dictionary prohibiting transmissions to certain users (see e.g., column 6, ll. 5 – 15) this list of e-mail addresses is based again on identifying profanity within the address itself (see e.g., column 5, ll. 50 – 56). Thus, it is clear that Bradshaw is not selecting a language filter based on an e-mail address input by the user, as could occur with the present invention. Rather, it simply implements a mechanical rule whereby all transmissions are blocked to a particular address based on examination of whether the address itself contains some objectionable language. See e.g., Examples 4 and 5 at column 11 thereof. Furthermore, while Bradshaw vaguely refers to the fact that e-mail content could be checked (see e.g., column 12, ll. 46+) it is notably short on details, and certainly does not describe or even hint at a mechanism like the present invention, where two types of words are considered.

This claim also specifies that the user is notified of the potential problem, while he/she is still entering said text content of the document. Again, this feature provides a convenient tool to document drafters that is absent from the kind of system shown in Bradshaw, in which the message drafter has little control over document content is controlled. Finally, as mentioned above for claim 1 for example, this claim also specifies that words are checked based on two separate criteria: namely, whether (1) they are indicated to be offensive and/or (2) potentially inappropriate for use in the document.

Applicants submit that this aspect of the invention, as currently reflected in the language of claim 29, clearly sets forth patentable subject matter based on any number of significant distinctions.

Dependent claims 30 – 35 set forth more particular embodiments including additional drafting tools that are beneficial to document drafters. As these claims depend from claim 29, they should be allowable for the same reason, and for the reasons already set forth in connection with the other claims above.

#### Claims 36 – 39

Independent claim 36 has also been amended and clearly sets forth subject matter that is non-obvious in light of the prior art. To wit, this claim now indicates that an electronic version of a language filter dictionary is generated by providing both a first dictionary, as well as a second dictionary for words. The first dictionary is provided "... for identifying each word in said set of words that has a meaning that is potentially inappropriate for use in communications with a

first group of persons.” Conversely the second status field is provided “... for identifying each word in said set of words that has a meaning that is potentially inappropriate for use in communications with a second group of persons.”

Thus this claim now sets forth that the electronic dictionary is constructed so that two different types of words for two different types of audiences can be identified and detected. For example, the first dictionary may include commonly understood offensive words (i.e., words that most persons would consider inappropriate), while the second dictionary may contain potentially embarrassing or harmful content, or more specific ethnic, gender, age, or race sensitive words. Again, as mentioned above, the prior art does not distinguish between the two, and at most only considers common offensive words. While Bradshaw alludes to custom Libraries (see e.g., column 12, ll. 42+) there is notably no detail given for any of the same, let alone any indication that any library is configured for more specific words that are designated as potentially inappropriate for certain communications intended for a particular group of persons that should not be exposed to such content. As alluded to above, these types of dictionaries of the present invention can be conveniently employed in a number of environments, including word processing and e-mail applications, so that document content control can be managed more flexibly – i.e., with reference to two different types of word filters.

Accordingly, as the operational steps of claim 36 are not taught or even hinted at in the prior art, Applicants submit that this claim should be in condition for allowance at this time.

Claims 37 – 39 depending from claim 36 are allowable for the same reasons as claim 36, and moreover because they also present additional patentable subject matter. Claim 37 notes that the first and second dictionaries are modifiable by an author of an electronic document using the dictionary to check said document; again, this type of editing tool is not provided for in the prior art. Claim 38 further specifies that the first and second dictionaries have status fields that can be modified to have any one of N possible values, where  $N \geq 2$ , and N corresponds to a degree of potential inappropriateness for a word. As claim 38 further specifies, extremely offensive words can be given a rating that is higher than less offensive words. This feature further facilitates flexible and fine tune control over contents of documents, because words can be graded in many shades of “gray” so to speak, instead of simply being classified as proper and/or improper. Finally, claim 39 should be allowable since it recites that at least one additional dictionary is provided for indicating whether such word has a meaning that is potentially inappropriate for use with a third group of persons. Again, the prior art shows no sensitivity or capability to provide filtering control based on

the identity of recipients. Accordingly, these claims also are believed to stand on their own and to merit allowance at this time.

#### Claims 40 – 52

These claims concern an electronic system for permitting a user to control which words are allowed in an electronic document. Such system, of course, could be implemented in a variety of different platforms, and independent claim 40 has now been amended to recite:

“... an electronic dictionary for identifying a set of filter words to be filtered from the electronic documents, said set of filter words including both offensive words and/or potentially inappropriate words, and which potentially inappropriate words are determined by considering an identity of an audience intended to receive the electronic document”

This claim is now believed to also be allowable for the same reasons as articulated above for claim 1 for example, so that discussion is not repeated here. Applicant thus submits that the present rejections in light of Bradshaw under § 103 are no longer supportable.

Claims 41 – 52 depending from claim 40 are also believed to be allowable at this time, in light of the amendments to claim 40, and further for the reasons articulate above for claims 2 – 13 and others containing similar limitations.

#### Claims 53 - 58 and 60.

Claim 53 was originally rejected in light of a combination of three separate references, including Bradshaw, Newbold and Roth. Applicant has amended this claim to now recite that the article includes:

“... an electronic dictionary including a set of words and a plurality of associated status fields for said set of words, each status field identifying an appropriateness rating for a particular audience for individual words in said set of words, such that an individual word can have a plurality of appropriateness ratings;

This aspect of the invention highlights the fact that a word might be associated with a plurality of status fields, each one having an appropriateness rating for the word for a particular audience. For the reasons set forth above, the prior art fails to disclose or suggest this extremely useful feature in any shape or form.

This claim further distinguishes by virtue of the fact that the word checking routine is configured so that it checks the appropriateness rating to see if it exceeds a threshold value specified for the document. In other words, there is an additional level of freedom provided by this aspect of

the invention, in that not only can it parse a document with a particular audience in mind (by considering which words might be potentially inappropriate for such audience), it can also be configured to only flag words that exceed a particular threshold for such audience on a document by document basis if need be, so that different levels of sensitivities can be accommodated between different groups of document drafters and document receivers. For instance, for a document sent to a first group of people that are familiar to the drafter, or which are closely linked to him/her in some fashion so that the risk of embarrassment or harm is small from an inadvertent use of incorrect language, the threshold might be set so that only words with (or exceeding) a particular rating might be flagged. Conversely, for other persons outside of such relationship to the sender, a lower threshold might be specified to ensure that the language content is more tightly specified.

For these reasons, and others expressed above, Applicants submit that claim 53 plainly distinguishes over the art cited of record. Claims 54 – 58 and 60 distinguish for the reasons already set forth above for the other pending claims, so this discussion is not repeated here.

#### Claims 61 – 63, 66 – 71

Independent claim 61 was originally rejected in light of Bradshaw, but has been amended in a fashion that should clearly distinguish over such reference, by incorporating the limitations of original claims 64 and 65. This claim is directed to a system for permitting a user to check the meaning of words in an electronic document. In contrast to the rigid and unforgiving approach of Bradshaw, the embodiments covered by this claim significantly assist a document author by:

“... (iii) alerting a user to the presence of said word when it is designated as potentially inappropriate; and (iv) allowing a user to modify said word in said document when it is designated as potentially inappropriate before transmitting said document to a third party; and (v) allowing a user of said word checking software module to specify a rating value for a word to be used in determining whether such word is potentially inappropriate.”

Thus, the user is not only alerted to the potential problem word, he/she is given an opportunity to change the word if necessary, and is further given a chance to specify rating values for words. This set of functionalities are not only not possible in Bradshaw, the disclosure therein expressly teaches away from giving users this degree of content distribution control. Accordingly this claim is believed to be in a condition for allowance as well.

Claims 62 – 63 and 66 – 71 are submitted to be patentable at this time as well in light of the above discussion, and for the reasons articulated above in connection with the other dependent claims expressing similar limitations.

#### Claims 72 - 75

Independent claim 72 was originally rejected in light of Bradshaw and Newbold, but has also been amended to distinguish over such references by specifically reciting the use of both a first dictionary and a second dictionary, and which dictionaries are used for classifying word content of documents. As set forth in the claim:

a first electronic dictionary incorporated as part of the electronic dictionary and being used for identifying any word in said set of words that is offensive; and a second electronic dictionary incorporated as part of the electronic dictionary and being used for identifying any word in said set of words that is potentially inappropriate for use in communications with a particular group of persons.

Thus, the claim now sets forth the significant distinction mentioned earlier, namely, that the electronic dictionary can be set up into different parts so that certain types of commonly offensive words can be identified as such through the use of a first dictionary, and furthermore that other types of words that are potentially inappropriate for distribution to a particular group are identified in a second electronic dictionary. For the reasons set forth earlier, the prior art fails to disclose and/or suggest this type of structure, and hence, allowance of this claim should now be proper.

Dependent claims 73 - 75 have also been amended to conform to the new language of claim 72, and should be allowable based on the discussion for claim 72 and for the reasons expressed for the other dependent claims earlier.

#### Claims 76 - 82

Independent claim 76 covers a method of checking the meaning of a word in an electronic document, and was also originally rejected in light of Bradshaw. Again, this claim, too, has been amended to point out the many distinct features and advantages over type of system shown in Bradshaw, and for that reason should be allowable. In particular, this claim now recites that the inventive process includes the steps of:

“... determining with a first electronic language filter whether said word has a particular meaning that is likely to be offensive to persons intended to read such document; and

determining with a second electronic language filter whether said word is potentially inappropriate for use in communications to said persons, based in part on considering an identity of said persons.”

Based on Applicant's review of the references, there is simply no hint or suggestion of using this type of methodology for reviewing content of documents. The use of different types of

language filters (in connection with a single group of persons) permits content management and distribution to be much more intelligently controlled than the simple “one rule fits all” approach of Bradshaw. Accordingly, allowance of this claim should also be proper at this time.

Dependent claims 77 – 82 are allowable for the same reasons as for claim 76, and for similar reasons to those expressed above in connection with other of the dependent claims.

#### New Claims 83 – 92

All of these claims in this set are dependent on claims discussed above, and for that reason, should also be allowable. They describe more particular embodiments of the inventions above, as follows:

Claim 83 merely specifies that the “... one or more electronic dictionaries correspond to one or more customized sets of filter words, each of said customized sets of filter words being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for a different intended recipient.” Again, this aspect of the claim focusses on the fact that different content rules can be specified for different persons or groups, and which is described in numerous places in the specification, and in FIG. 1 (status fields SF1, SF2, etc.).

New claim 84 (depending from claim 1) more particularly emphasizes that the first electronic dictionary includes offensive words (i.e., common profanity/obscenity, racist language, sexist language, etc.), while the second electronic dictionary will “... include words that may cause embarrassment or financial loss by their inclusion in the document to said intended recipient.” Again, this aspect of the invention is described in the disclosure at page 1, l. 18 to page 2, line 4; page 4, ll. 1 – 11; page 11, ll. 4 – 9, etc. and is directed to an implementation to help businesses from sustaining losses from inadvertent document content.

New claim 85 emphasizes that it is a plurality of second electronic dictionaries that are checked to determine if a word is potentially inappropriate, so that a check is made for a plurality of intended recipients (all of whom may have different language filtering rules). This is discussed, for example in the specification, at page 15, ll. 12 – 24 and other instances.

New claim 86 depending from claim 84, further specifies that the set of filter words are based on the ethnicity, gender and/or language speaking characteristic of an intended recipient. New claims 88 (depending from claim 14) 89 (depending from claim 29), 91 (depending from claim 36) 92 (depending from claim 41) include either identical or similar limitations. See e.g., the discussion at page 15, ll. 1+.

New claim 87 depends from claim 1, and more specifically recites that the document includes "... an e-mail message, an electronic spreadsheet, an electronic database, or an electronic word processing document." New claim 90 (depending from claim 29) includes either identical or similar limitations. This aspect of the invention is discussed, for example, at page 12, l. 3+.

#### New Claims 93 - 100

New claims 93 – 100 are directed to the aspects of the invention which permit yet additional measures of control over document content based on the use of a language sensitivity threshold level. In other words, in some applications it may be desirable to not trigger an alert for a document - even when words defined as potentially inappropriate according to some rule are found – unless such content exceeds some threshold level that can be adjusted to suit the particular application. Thus, independent claim 93 thus recites that the inventive process includes the steps of: **specifying a language filter to be used for inspecting words of the electronic document to determine if it contains potentially inappropriate content, said language filter being based in part on an identity of an intended recipient of the electronic document and specifying a language sensitivity threshold level to be used when evaluating the electronic document.** An output (i.e. an alert or a text file) is generated indicating when said language sensitivity threshold is exceeded based on words in the electronic document.

Like other of the claims herein, this claim reiterates that the language filter is based on an identity of an intended recipient. Again, this is unlike the systems of the prior art, and clearly distinguishes thereover. Moreover, the prior art fails to describe the use of a threshold level in the manner called for in this claim, which allows for finer control over the content of a document than is possible with such prior art systems. For example, particular users might set a threshold level to be higher for one audience (so that only extremely offensive words are flagged by the filter) while the same threshold level might be set lower for another intended audience which have increased language sensitivities. This aspect of the invention is discussed at page 10, lines 20 – 25 of the specification for example, and in other places. The Roth filter mentioned by the Examiner, as noted above, does not operate in this fashion, and suggests nothing along the lines of what is now claimed in new claim 93.

New dependent claims 94 – 96 merely build on claim 93, and should be allowable as well. Claim 94 specifies that an individual rating value is provided for each word in the document, and this is what is compared against the language sensitivity threshold level. Claim 95 indicates that the



rating value and the sensitivity threshold level are both adjustable, which again is a helpful feature when the invention is used in word processing environments. Finally, claim 96 indicates that the rating value is specified as a status field value in an electronic dictionary uses as part of the language filter.

Claims 97 – 100 are system claims, and cover other embodiments of the invention, but are believed to be patentable for substantially the same reasons as claims 93 – 96 above.

Based on these noticeable improvements, Applicants submit that these claims clearly embody patentable subject matter, and thus allowance of the same is requested.

#### New Claims 101 – 104

New independent claim 101 is directed to a method of controlling distribution of an electronic document to prevent dissemination of embarrassing and/or harmful content. This claim is believed to be allowable, as it includes a step of identifying potentially inappropriate words that should not be included in an electronic document, which words are based in part on a consideration of an identity of the intended third party recipient. Again, the prior art does not discuss or hint at such an implementation, which, as noted above, allows greater control because the set of flagged words can be tailored to a specific group. Depending on the results of the inspection, corrective action can be taken to eliminate any problems and/or to prevent distribution of the document. For the reasons set forth earlier, this claim, too, should be allowable at this time.

Dependent claims 102 to 104 describe further specific implementations that are already discussed above, and, for those reasons, should be allowable as well.

#### New Claims 105 – 108

New independent claim 105 is also directed to a method of controlling language content of an electronic document, and specifies, among other things, that words in an electronic dictionary can be defined by two separate classifications: (1) **by specifying a first rating value for a first status field associated with the word in an electronic dictionary** (to identify the word as offensive); (2) **by specifying a second rating value for a second status field associated with the word in the electronic dictionary, the second rating value being based in part on a consideration of a gender, language use and/or ethnicity of a particular recipient** (to identify the word as potentially inappropriate for communication with the particular intended recipient of the electronic document). Thus the content of a document can be examined with reference to two

different language rules if desired. Again, this is a significant advance over the single rule/single content filter approach discussed in Bradshaw, as it allows more flexibility between individual users and individual documents.

New dependent claims 106 to 108 describe further specific implementations that are already discussed above, and, for those reasons, should be allowable as well.

#### New Claims 109 – 114

New independent claim 109 describes a more detailed embodiment of another aspect of the invention, namely a system for checking the word content of an electronic document. This claim should be allowable as it recites that the electronic dictionary used for checking the document is **“... set up such that one or more status fields can be associated with such dictionary words, said status fields containing a rating for an offensiveness and/or inappropriateness of such dictionary word for a corresponding audience.”** Again, this allows the user to select a particular dictionary of choice when controlling content of a document for a particular audience. For this reason, this claim (and its dependent claims 110 – 114) should be allowable.

#### New Claims 115 – 117

New independent claim 115 covers a method of checking content of an electronic document, and notably recites a step of **“... configuring a language filter to be used for inspecting content of the electronic document to determine if it contains potentially inappropriate text, said language filter being configured based in part on an identity of intended recipients of the electronic document.”** In other words, the document can be evaluated and tailored on a group by group basis. Thus, unlike the other prior art of record, embodiments using this invention can adjust the language filter “... as needed according to said identity of said intended recipients.” This aspect of the inventions is described at pages 14 – 15. Accordingly, this claim is submitted to be allowable of the art of record, since it provides functionality that goes beyond the single, always fixed, one-size fits all approach of Bradshaw.

Dependent claims 116 and 117 depending from claim 115 should be allowable as well. These merely specify additional details of how to set up the language filter, and are similar to claims already discussed above.

#### New Claims 118 – 122

New independent claim 118 is also directed to a method of checking content of an electronic document. This claim specifically sets out that either or both of a first language filter and/or a second language filter can be used for checking a document, where the first language filter is associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a first group of persons, and the second language filter is associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a second group of persons. Based on the inspection of the document, a decision of whether to disseminate it or not can then be made. As with claim 115, this aspect of the invention clearly distinguishes over the types of systems shown in the art of record.

Dependent claims 119 - 122 should also be allowable. Claim 119 describes the step of setting up the first and/or second language filters as part of an electronic dictionary. The electronic dictionary, as explained in the specification, can be made up of one or more customized electronic dictionaries containing words corresponding to the first and second language filters. Claim 120 merely refines the content of the filters, by explaining the first language filter includes words that are offensive and/or obscene (i.e., would be perceived as potentially inappropriate by most persons) and claim 121 further builds on claim 120 by specifying that the second language filter includes words that may cause embarrassment or financial loss by their inclusion in the electronic document. Finally, claim 122 indicates that when said word is included within either of said first language filter and/or second language filter, an indication of which of said first language filter and/or second language filters was triggered is provided. This aspect of the invention is described at page 11, ll. 14 – 15 and is helpful, for example, to understand the nature of the language problem, and for deciding whether the document might still be distributed. Consequently, Applicants submit that these claims should be allowable as well.

#### New claims 123 – 125

New claim 123 mirrors much of the language of new claim 115, and is allowable for substantially the same reasons. The system of this claim checks content of an electronic document by configuring a “... configurable language filter based in part on an identity of an intended recipient of the electronic document.” Thus “... dissemination of the electronic document can be controlled based on whether the content is appropriate for an intended audience.” Accordingly, this claim, and its dependent claims (124 – 125) should be allowable at this time.

#### New claims 126 – 128

New claim 126 also describes a system for checking content of an electronic document, and is allowable for similar reasons expressed above for claims 115 and 118. This claim notably covers a system that includes "... a language filter consisting of a first language filter and a second language filter, said first language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a first group of persons, and said second language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a second group of persons" This feature, again, allows for more careful tailoring and distribution control for electronic documents, since the system can select "... either or both of said first and second language filters for checking words in the document based on an identity of an intended recipient of the electronic document." Thus, document distribution/content control can be adjusted on a recipient by recipient basis.

Dependent claims 127 and 128 should be allowable for the same reasons articulated already for claims 116 and 117 respectively.

#### New claims 129 – 131

New independent claim 129 also covers a method of checking content of electronic documents. This claim further recites that words of a first document are inspected "... : with a language filter selected for the first electronic document..." thereafter, the same steps can be repeated for a second electronic document "... wherein a language filter selected for the second electronic document can be varied from that used for said first electronic document. Thus, this claim focusses on those aspects of the present invention which are directed to document distribution control on a document by document basis. Again, in the prior art systems, there is no notion or suggestion that language content for a document can be considered or specified differently between different documents. For this reason, this claim should be allowable at this time.

Dependent claims 130 and 131 depending from claim 129 should be allowable for the same reasons expressed immediately above, and for the further reasons discussed above in connection with claims 124 and 125 for example.

#### New claims 132 - 134

Independent claim 132 is directed to a system for checking content of an electronic document module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform, among other things, the following operations: "... **selecting either or both of said first and second language filters as said language filter for checking content of electronic documents such that a first language filter can be used when said electronic document is a first type of document for a first audience, while a second language filter can be used when said electronic document is a second type of document.**" In other words, this aspect of the invention allows for controlled dissemination of electronic documents on a case by case basis by using a language filter that is based on the type of document being distributed. Again, this type of functionality is not disclosed or suggested by the prior art, and so this claim should be allowable at this time.

Dependent claims 133 and 134 should be allowable for the same reasons articulated already for claims 116 and 117 respectively.

#### New claims 135 - 140

Finally, claims 135 – 140 are directed to the batch inspection and verification capabilities described in the specification at page 12 among other places. As recited in claim 135, during these operations, the content of electronic documents is inspected and verified by the use of a set of language filters "**... each of said language filters being associated with a set of words that are inappropriate for use with a corresponding recipient group for said one or more electronic documents.**" Thus, these claims should also be allowable for the reasons set forth above, including the fact that during the batch process any particular document can be examined and considered in light of a particular language filter for a particular group of recipients.

Dependent claims 136 and 137 should be allowable. Claim 136 specifies that "... different language filters can be used for different electronic documents and different recipient groups," again, a notion that is not disclosed or suggested in the art. Furthermore, claim 137 describes that "... at least one of said language filters contains words whose common usage is considered offensive. For the reasons explained above, these claims should be allowable.

Claims 138 – 140 are analogous in many regards to claims 135 – 137, and while they are directed to a system instead having slightly different characteristics, they are nonetheless allowable over the art for most of the same reasons.

## CONCLUSION

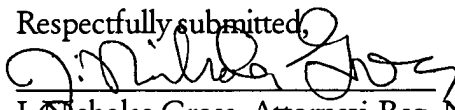
The objections and rejections of the Examiner have been considered in detail, and the claims have been amended to address such concerns. Accordingly, they are believed to be in patentable condition at this time.

A petition and fee (\$435) for a three month extension of time to respond to the Office Action is also filed herewith. A separate check for the fees associated with the filing of the new claims herein is also enclosed. Please charge any deficiencies to our deposit account no. 501-244.

Should the Examiner believe it that it would be helpful to discuss any of the above points in person, Applicant is open to a telephone conference (415-551-8298) at any convenient time.

Date: June 9, 2000

Respectfully submitted,



J. Nicholas Gross, Attorney, Reg. No. 34,175

*I hereby certify that the foregoing is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service, postage prepaid, to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, this 9th<sup>th</sup> day of June 2000*